

A circular ink stamp from the Bureau of Customs and Finance, Department of State. The text "BUREAU OF CUSTOMS AND FINANCE" is curved along the top inner edge, and "DEPARTMENT OF STATE" is curved along the bottom inner edge. In the center, the word "RECEIVED" is printed in a bold, sans-serif font. Below "RECEIVED", the date "JUL 6 1953" is stamped. To the right of the date, the handwritten number "116" is visible. The stamp is partially obscured by a horizontal line and some other markings.

is an Albanian refugee, 19 years of age, who escaped to Yugoslavia from a forced labor project near MALIQ in October 1951. He was permitted by the Yugoslav authorities to come to Trieste on May 15, 1953, and he is now housed in the refugee camp.

General History

Escaped with his father and two brothers, one of whom has fled to Greece. The father and one brother remain in Yugoslavia, at PITOVELES.

The source attended elementary school in his home village of FLORE near KORCE. He had only 1 1/2 years of secondary school in Korce after which he returned to work on his father's farm. On the whole he appears to have little information of value and it is necessary for him to explain himself at great length.

In September 1951, [redacted] forced to leave Flog by order from the village consul (KESHILLI I FSHATIT), one Neki BEGTASHI, a Communist 27 years old. The orders came from Osman NEMINI in Korce who was formerly consul in Flog. He also is considered by the source to be a loyal Communist about 26 years of age. Seven persons were ordered from Flog, a village of about 150 homes, to work on a project constructing a road along the southern shore of Lake MALIQ to connect with another main road leading to PODGORIE (40° 49' N 20° 47' E). The seven persons selected from Flog were labeled as Kulaks and anti-Communist agitators. They were chosen from different families and their ages ranged from 17 to 28. The source was to be paid 2500 Leks per month, but the first month's pay was withheld. Late in October as the bad weather approached the source heard that the entire group would be moved to DURRAS. He left the project and met his father and two brothers near HALARUP from which they made their way to the Yugoslav border at a point east of POGRADEC on the southern shore of Lake OHRID. Once across the frontier they were taken by motor boat to the city of Ohrid, Yugoslavia.

The source had no idea about the reason for constructing a highway in the area described above. The importance of the project is indicated by the numbers employed, if figures given are --

GRKenney:mcl

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accurate. He said that about 300 paid voluntary workers were employed, about 200 voluntary workers, mostly youth, who were not paid, about 100-150 forced laborers not paid, and perhaps 100 more forced laborers like himself who were supposed to be paid. This means that about 700-750 workers were employed in the completion of a 15 kilometer stretch of road, five to six meters in width. Work was commenced on the project in 1950 and was more than two-thirds completed when the source escaped. The road was made of stone with asphalt surface.

A bridge was completed by the group over the DEVOLI river in 1951. The bridge was made with a wooden floor supported by four reinforced concrete piles used as a base for the iron latticework sides. The bridge was about 50-60 meters in length and slightly wider than the road.

Completion of the road project was hampered by bad weather for six months each year, and was probably hampered by the escape of workers to Yugoslavia or Greece. All seven of the workers drafted from Flog have escaped. The details are as follows:

(all) C-1

Ramadan ADEMI	escaped to Yugoslavia in 1951 and then to Greece in 1952.
Dervish HYSNIU	" " "
Muhamet RIFATI	escaped to Yugoslavia in 1951.
Resmi HASANI	" "
Bedri ELEZI	" "
Hysen ALUI	Arrested in 1952 and jailed in TIRANA. After 2 months confinement he was released and one day later fled to Greece.

The source saw many Communist Greeks in Korce in 1949. They were either escapees or partisans and numbered altogether in the area about 2000 persons. The local government authorities gave aid to these persons who have since moved from the region to an unknown place.

Attitudes and Opinions

C-1 saw anti-Communist literature which he said was dropped from airplanes on night flights over the area around Korce. It was usually one page from the Albanian National Committee urging the population to help anti-Communists resist or escape from the SIGURIMI. The people were able to read the propaganda in spite of the Sigurimi. The source thought it would be better to ask the population to remain calm and wait patiently for the day of liberation. The Albanians, he said, will need arms, the help of clandestine organizations, and knowledge of "D day" in order to liberate themselves from the Hoxha

Trieste

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regime. No help is expected from Yugoslavia, however. He knew of no organized resistance near his home, but many were anti-Communists. About half of the opposition is pro-Zog and half pro-national committee.

The source heard of the Greek-Turkish-Yugoslav friendship pact which he considered not in the interest of Albania. Italians, he said, were also a threat to Albania. With enemies so near on all sides, the Albanians must work out their own problems, but he thought the situation hopeless without outside help. The source was very anxious to express himself on these points and spoke voluntarily at great length, particularly regarding his hostility toward Yugoslavia;

The source is a Moslem who went to the Mosque only for BAJRAM or other big holidays. He said all young persons in his area were afraid to go to the Mosques because those who believe in God are considered dangerous to the regime.

Miscellaneous

While [redacted] was in Yugoslavia he met Sami CERCOLLI who was jailed in Korce in 1946. From the jail he had been transferred to a concentration camp near TIRANA for forced labor. From the camp he escaped through the DIBRA zone in 1953 by walking for 13 days to the Yugoslav frontier. The source also met Halit MULLA from Floq who had also been transferred to the same camp from Korce prison. Mulla was arrested in 1950 because of his contacts with persons working in Albania for Greece. Mulla was a railroad construction foreman and is now in KUMANOVO, Yugoslavia. Cercolli was a farmer, and he is now in Titoveles, Yugoslavia. Neither of these persons provided the source with current information about Albania because the contact was too brief.

The Department is requested to forward processed copies of this despatch to Rome and Athens, and two copies to U.S.POLAD.

A. John Cope, Jr.
Acting U. S. Political Adviser

cc: Belgrade

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